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Northeastern University

Student Government Association Elections Committee Grievance Filings

Student Government Association

March 27, 2012

Grievance #5 2012

Student Government Association, Northeastern University

Recommended Citation

Student Government Association, Northeastern University, "Grievance #5 2012" (2012). *Student Government Association Elections Committee Grievance Filings*. Paper 6.

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Student Government Association of Northeastern University
332 Curry Student Center • 360 Huntington Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 02115

Grievance #5 (Refiled)

File Date: 2012-03-27
File Time: 1:42 p.m.
Elections Committee Chair: Taylor Cotter
Merit Status: Approved

Complainant: Anonymous
Campaign: Unleash Northeastern

Claim 1: Unleash Northeastern's digital media campaign materials do not say "Paid for by…".

Violation in Question:
Section 5.3

Verdict:
Sanction:

Student Government Association
of Northeastern University

Student Government Association
332 Curry Student Center
Northeastern University
360 Huntington Avenue

t: 617.373.2651
e: sga@neu.edu
w: www.sga.neu.edu

GRIEVANCE REPORT FORM

This form is to be used to file a grievance against a candidate for office based on violation(s) you have personally witnessed during the course of the campaign period. The Direct Elections Policies Manual defines a grievance as an "allegation that a candidate and/or his or her campaign workers have knowingly violated the Association's governing documents (including this manual)."

For any grievance report to be found with merit and/or considered, it must be submitted prior to the certification of election results.

Submitter's Information

Name(s): Anon

Email(s): anonymousgrievances2012@gmail.com

Phone Number(s): n/a

Do you wish to file this grievance anonymously? Circle: Yes or No

Please Note: The Association aims to protect the identity of anyone submitting a grievance for any reason. If in the case that **insufficient** evidence exists, we may request that you provide any additional evidence, witnesses, or personal testimony, through which your identity may be revealed.

Violation Information

Name of Candidate/Slate: Petrin/Naraghi/Unleash Northeastern

Date of Violation: 3/25/2012

Time of Violation: 11:51pm; ongoing

Location of Violation: Internet

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Please provide a full description of the violation(s) you witnessed, including any and all relevant evidence. You may attach additional sheets of paper, documents, photographs, etc. if needed:

(see attached)

By signing and dating below, I confirm that all information written on this form and/or attached to this form is accurate and truthful.

ANONYMOUS
Signature

3/26/12
Date

Please return (in a sealed envelope) to the SGA office, addressed:
GRIEVANCE CLAIM
ATTN: Elections Committee, Chair

--- or ---

Email a scanned copy to:
Cotter.t@husky.neu.edu

Grievance Statement

On Sunday evening, March 25, 2012, the Unleash Northeastern campaign (consisting of Presidential Candidate- Peter Petrin and Executive Vice Presidential Candidate- Nicholas Naraghi) released a campaign video encouraging students to vote for them and advocating for their campaign.

Neither the video nor the description below it, nor the Facebook page, nor the Twitter includes the text "Paid for by [slate name]"

Further, Unleash Northeastern has maintained a Facebook page since the elections season began on the 14th of March that similarly does not include any text similar to "Paid for by [slate name]"

Finally, the Twitter account maintained by Unleash Northeastern also does not include such text.

The SGA elections manual at section 5.3 provides the following clarification on campaign material.

"All **campaign material** must identify the slate sponsoring the material. It shall read, "Paid for by the [slate's name]." Candidates running on different slates are not allowed to share campaign-related material."

The glossary feature of the SGA Elections Manual includes this definition of **campaign related material:**

"Campaign-Related Material: Websites, chalking, posters, club cards or anything that promotes one campaign over another, including digital media.

Per the definition of "campaign related material," Unleash Northeastern's Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube videos constitute "anything that promotes one campaign over another, **including digital media**"

It is understandable that the Unleash Northeastern campaign may claim that this stipulation of the manual is only intended for paid media, for the rule exists in the campaign finance section of the manual.

But later, the manual refers specifically to "all spending," but **this** section of the Campaign Finance section does not clarify. As no section of the Manual exists to clarify material which meets the definition of "campaign related material" in the appendix but of which is procured free of charge to the Campaign, the definition of "**all campaign material**" in 5.3 must mean what it says—**all** material, and not merely material in which the Campaign seeks to be reimbursed.

This rule is under section 5 not because it relates to anything that is purchased but that this is the section that deals with requirements that the materials must adhere to during their **construction phase**, while the section on Elections Promotion deals with the requirements materials must adhere to during their **distribution phase**. Additionally, a great majority of the provisions in section 7 (elections promotion) are rules the Elections Committee must abide by for general promotion of candidates.

The "Paid for by…" slogan exists as to show which material is officially endorsed by a campaign and candidate. This is to avoid misinformation for the student body. In a campaign where the Unleash campaign has made the argument they are being attacked by parody accounts, it is even MORE important that the campaigns make note which are officially endorsed.

The filer of this grievance requests that the committee take the pattern that this campaign has shown of disregarding section 5.3. in its decision.

Evidence

About

Unleash Your Husky Potential. Check us out on Twitter: @Unleash_NU - Pete Petrin For Student Body President & Nick Naraghi for Executive Vice President

Description

It's time for a change - not just a change in the policies of our campus, but in the way that change happens on our campus.

This campaign is not about playing politics or making a name. It's about igniting real change, starting with the way your voice is heard. We believe there is an unfortunate disconnect between SGA and the opinions of the student body, and simple solutions can fix that.

Though SGA has been making applaudable strides over the past year, we believe there is even more to be done. Our goal is to bridge this gap and make the voice of the student body the driving force behind the student government.

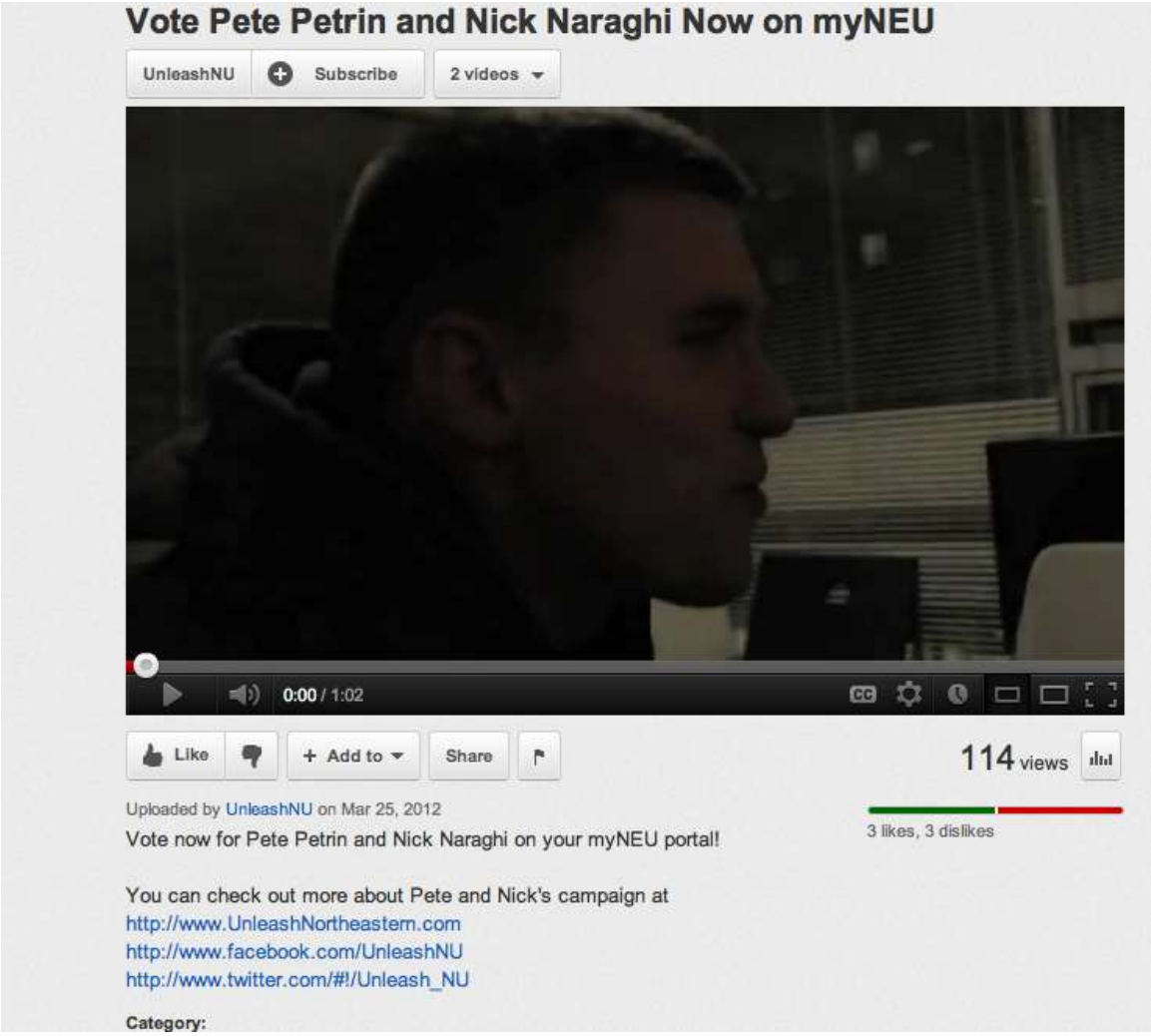
Vote to unleash your husky potential. Vote Pete Petrin for President and Nick Naraghi for Executive Vice President on myneu on March 26 - April 1, 2012.

Thanks to Vivian Ho for all her hard work on our designs!

Facebook About Section

Facebook Page

Official Twitter with description area



Youtube video description area

Direct links to video:

http://youtu.be/6Qj964o-O84